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ABSTRACT

This resource packet provides a sample of free and inexpensive learning activities and materials on African culture for elementary and secondary grade students which are available from the African-American Institute. Learning activities entitled "Essential Africa for the Twenty-First Century" are designed to help pupils realize that Africans are people like themselves who deal with the same human delights and problems. A cross cultural approach is emphasized throughout whereby children are made aware of their own culture and way of life, after which new ideas and activities incorporating African material are introduced and transferred back to the study of American life. Brief units are provided on Kenya and the Ivory Coast, along with suggested resources for teaching about these areas. Listings of existing syllabi and other materials that deal with other areas and the continent in general are given. Resources available from the African-American Institute, School Services Division, 833 United National Plaza, New York, New York 10017, include a packet of case studies dealing with economic development and social change in Africa; an African youth magazine; resources for studying the energy crisis; and other materials such as stories, games, recipes and audiovisual materials. (Author/RM)

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SCHOOL SERVICES DIVISION

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"ESSENTIAL AFRICA" FOR THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

INTRODUCTION

Our aim in this resource packet is to present to you learning activities for your pupils which will give them an African experience, ones which will help them realize that Africans are people like themselves who deal with the same human delights and problems as we do.

The materials and methods suggested may be familiar to many of you for we have taken as our starting point what is taught to American children about their own culture and way of life. We have tried to blend into this basis new ideas and activities incorporating African material which can then be transferred back to the study of American life or applied to the study of other cultures. We have organized the work into three separate but related approaches to allow you to integrate the study of Africa into your teaching more easily and have detailed suggestions on how to use and relate these ideas to your already defined curriculum. We hope our efforts are successful and that the ideas excite you to take the riches of Africa into your classrooms.

QUESTIONS TO EXPLORE THROUGHOUT THE STUDY

1. How are the lives of the children like/unlike ours? To get at this, these could be discussed:

(a) Who is considered part of their family?
(b) What kinds of games do they play?
(c) What kinds of chores do they do?
(d) What do they study in school?
(e) What kind of food do they eat?
(f) What kinds of clothes do they wear?
(g) What kinds of houses do they live in? What do these reveal about the climate?

2. We live in neighborhoods, small towns/large cities, states and a nation. Examine the materials carefully and try to determine the communities in which the Africans studied live. How are these like/unlike ours?

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3. Examine a map of your state and one of the country as a whole. Notice the network of roads, railroads, rivers, population clusters and resources. Now examine a map of the particular country studied, noting the same items. Older children should be able to discuss the concept of "development" with this exercise. They might also go further into the study of industrialization and utilization of resources.

4. Most of the people in these studies know or are learning a European language. Why is this important for them and for us?

5. What aspects of their lives seem attractive to your students? (Generally the social and human values appeal to children). What aspects of our lives would likely appeal to them? How can we share with one another?

HOW TO .....

When American children learn about their own culture in school they begin with themselves and their families and move outward. We would suggest this approach for the study of Africa : focus on an African child and his/her family and then move outward.

To illustrate how this can be done we have put together units on Kenya and Ivory Coast. We have also listed already existing syllabi and other materials that deal with other areas and the continent in general. Each could be used alone or in conjunction with the others; all are multi-disciplinary. Ideally, we would like to see you spend at least three weeks teaching about Africa : a case study of Kenya, followed by a comparative study with the Ivory Coast and completed by an overview of the continent. Yet we realize that this may not be possible. Therefore, we have tried to annotate the materials we are suggesting in such a manner that you can pick and choose, expand and contract the study to meet your needs.

KENYA

If you decide to study Kenya, your students could begin by seeing the movie Family of the City : Adventure in Nairobi* which will introduce them to a young boy who lives in Kenya's capital.

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*Full citations for all materials are listed on the attached resource lists.

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This glimpse of urban African family life could be expanded by another film, Industrial Worker of Kenya. Together these can generate a discussion on what it is like to be a child growing up in a contemporary city on the continent. To supplement them and add the rural perspective you could select material from Cuban and Soja's Kenya and the State Department Background Notes on Kenya. The items excerpted could be picked for their similarity or contrast with the kinds of data presented in the social studies text you use with your pupils' learning patterns of American life.

Into this material you can plug the science items, the reading books and music for these will expand the students' experience with Kenya. Too, rather than counting apples and balloons or calculating the distance between Boston and Chicago in mathematics classes, your pupils could count bananas and beans (two items described in the science booklets) and figure out how far Nairobi is from Mombasa (the trip Mumo makes in one story). In other words, you could use the materials on the resource lists attached to integrate Kenya into all the subjects you are teaching, putting together a comprehensive Kenya unit.

IVORY COAST

After students have explored Kenya, a former British colony in East Africa, they could look at a former French colony in West Africa, Ivory Coast. Two filmstrips could open this study: A Village Family of Modern Africa and A City Family of Modern Africa. You could follow these by the film, An African City : Contrasting Cultures. From these children will have a fairly comprehensive picture of the changing rural and urban cultures of the country. They could begin to examine how the lives of children growing up in the two city areas and in the village are alike and different. Older pupils could discuss aspects of traditional rural life which seem to be incorporated into city life patterns.

For reading materials, you could use Ahmadou's World, A Week in Aya's World, excerpts from State Department Background Notes on Ivory Coast, and the readings which School Services has compiled. All of these can expand the pupils' knowledge of children of the country. The latter readings also include a folk tale, recipes and a game which could expose your students experientially to aspects of Ivorian life. We have attached, too, a sample lesson plan for one aspect of these readings.

Finally, they might draw comparisons and contrasts between Ivorian and Kenyan childhood, family patterns, education, recreation, etc. They might enjoy drawing posters or charts which illustrate these differences and similarities and add to these appropriate material from their own lives.

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This might be a suitable point from which to move into a broader study of the continent. Students have already identified rural and urban patterns of living and have compared these between two countries. Are living styles similar elsewhere? Fishing and Farming in Africa and the film, Village on Stilts will bring in the live of riverine peoples in Dahomey, adding another dimension.

Or you might turn to two syllabi developed in Massachusetts: Aiyetoro : A Village in Western Nigeria and African Studies Handbook for Elementary and Secondary School Teachers. Both are rich in readings, visuals and activities that could form the basis for your extended unit. New York City's Black Studies syllabus, on the other hand, might be useful for teachers who want to relate the African heritage directly to the Afro-American experience. It, too, contains details on materials and resources.

Further, any study of Africa can be transferred from the social studies classroom into the other subjects. Why not put on some plays written for African children? The Four Friends and Vulture! Vulture! contain simple easy-to-produce selections. Children might work in committees and/or make puppets for these. Or, if your students are interested in animals and conservation they might like to see animals as Africans themselves perceive them; African Animals Through African Eyes would be appropriate for these youngsters. In the art room, you could work with African Crafts for You to Make and in the science laboratory, you might experiment with the lessons in the African Primary Science Program. Lastly, the listing of resources attached suggests other activities and items you will find useful and fun for enriching your pupils' study of Africa.

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APPENDIX A

"ESSENTIAL AFRICA" FOR THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

KENYA RESOURCES

I. Written Materials

A. Social Studies

Larry Cuban and Edward W. Soja. Kenya. Glenview, Illinois: Scott Foresman & Company, 1973. About $6.

Colorful, easy-reading, focused on people. Uses newspaper articles and other primary sources plus literature to elaborate themes. Mainly an "area studies" approach but could easily be excerpted and used as supplement to usual classroom text.

Lorene K. Fox, ed. East African Childhood. New York: Oxford University Press, 1969. About $4.

Three biographies written by Africans which describe how they were raised. Two are by Kenyans. All are simply and well written and could be read aloud to younger children or excerpted for the middle school ages. Though they concentrate on traditional practices, each discusses how formal schooling and other influences are changing the older practices.

U.S. Department of State. Background Notes on Kenya. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1970. 25¢.

Four-page fact sheet - economic, historical, political and social - on Kenya. Since the style is less than scintillating, it might best be used as a teacher resource or adapted for students.

B. English and Reading

Godfrey Brown. The Jackal and The Camel. "The All Africa Readers Series:Kenya". *Lagos, Nigeria: African Universities Press, 1970. About 50¢.

Delightful story of how a joke turns on the jackal; origin of a proverb. Story is illustrated and each page contains exercises to check comprehension and suggestions for other language activities.

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* All the items which are produced in Africa can be obtained through African Imprint Library Services, Guard Hill Road, Bedford, New York 10506. Because these items come direct from the continent it is best to order them well in advance - 6 weeks or longer!

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B. English and Reading (continued)

Terry Hirst. Mumo Goes to Town. Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1969. About $1.

Mumo goes with his parents to Nairobi, gets lost, is found, and finds a pet. Pleasant story with such vivid illustrations that a non-reader can figure out the story line and enjoy it.

Terry Hirst. Mumo at the Coast. Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1969. About $1.

Another story of Mumo; little boy goes to Mombasa with his father for a day and explores the harbor, a museum and an old fort, shops and other sites. Novel approach to geography; a child could read this in conjunction with usual material on Mombasa or as an example of life in an East African coastal town.

Hezekiah Wepukhulu. "Kenya: Seriff, Soccer Soothsayer" in Africa Report, Vol. 18, No. 6, November-December 1973, pp. 22-23.

Description and interview with a Kenyan who makes his livelihood predicting soccer game results! With youth's interest in spirituality, this reading should be much fun. Seriff's image, too, could be compared with that which children generally hold of a so-called "witch doctor".

C. Science and Mathematics

P.M. Kareithi. The Banana Tree. "EAPH First Science Readers Series". Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1968. About $1.

Very easy reading, illustrated, 27-page booklet describing the banana plant, its growth and many uses. Again this was written for African students but American children could use it both to find out about an important African food and aspects of the continent's culture.

Muriel Feelings. "Moja" Means One: A Swahili Counting Book. New York: Dial Press, 1971. About $4.

Your students can learn to count in Swahili with this illustrated easy-to-read book. They might try adding and subtracting aloud in Swahili for variety!

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C. Science and Mathematics (continued)

Thomas R. Odhiambo. 1. Our Garden. 2. Crawling Life. 3. Our Pets. 4. Our Food. "Look at Life Series". Nairobi, Kenya: East African Publishing House, 1969.

Roughly 25-page booklets written for Kenyan primary school children each containing descriptive materials on three sub-topics. (Our Garden : mushrooms, beans, butterflies.) Easy reading with illustrations, new vocabulary and suggested activities. Since the material included is familiar both to Africans and Americans, U.S. children could use these in their science classes. About $3 for the set.

II. Audio-Visual Materials

Family of the City: Adventure in Nairobi (16 min., 16 mm. color film $15 rental) McGraw-Hill; Text-Film Division; 1221 Avenue of the Americas, New York, N.Y. 10019.

Story of two little boys who, when their parents are busy, go to the airport to watch plans land and take off. When they tell what they saw at dinner their parents think they just dreamed their adventure. Because the setting is urban - modern, this film is excellent for children whose stereotypes of Africa include only grass houses and poorly-clothed people.

The Industrial Worker of Kenya. (11 min., 16 mm. color film rental $15) Films Incorporated, 1144 Wilmette Avenue, Wilmette, Illinois 60091.

Short film showing a man and his family living and working in Nairobi. In the film they visit their extended family in the village so children watching this get a picture of both urban and rural life. The man's implied desire to return to farming can be contrasted with the reading in the Cuban and Soja book on Daniel Muroki where he says he wishes to be a city worker. Older children could use this for a debate on the advantages/disadvantages or urban life in a developing country.

Super Super Mambo Jazz, AIT 501 Stereo and Golden Eagles, by the Eagles Lupopo Group on EMI/ERLP1.

Two long-play records of popular Kenyan music. Why not introduce your students to popular contemporary music as a motivation for learning more about the continent? Or use these for background music while other activities are going on. Children will also likely be able to discuss contemporary music's similarities across continents after listening to these.

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"ESSENTIAL AFRICA" FOR THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

IVORY COAST RESOURCES

I. Written Materials

A. Social Studies

Victor D. Dubois. Ahmadou's World : A Case Study of a Voltaic Immigrant to the Ivory Coast. Hanover, New Hampshire:American Universities Field Staff, 1970. About $1.

Sixteen-page, lively narrative describing a house servant, his family, neighborhood and style of life. Besides being interesting reading on its own, the biography makes more personalized Adjamé, the African suburb described in the Bailey Film.

U.S. Department of State. Background Notes on Ivory Coast. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1970. 25¢.

Straightforward, factual material on economic, political and social development of Ivory Coast. Includes a section on U.S. policy towards the country. The comment on style made earlier on these notes, holds here, too.

Reprint from Hi Neighbor. "Ivory Coast". New York: School Services, 1974. Attached.

Two biographies of children (one rural, one urban), game and recipes for elementary school pupils. The source from which this is taken is now out of print; we have reproduced sections which are especially useful for studying children.

B. English and Reading

See the Hi Neighbor reprint above.

Marc and Evelyn Bernheim. A Week in Aya's World: The Ivory Coast. New York, MacMillan: 1969. About $4.

Warm and delightful photographs with simple narrative showing how Aya and her family live. Some of the photographs could be discussion starters by themselves as they include so many elements. Too, non-readers will be able to "read" this because of the visuals.

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II. Audio-Visual Materials

1. A Village of Modern Africa, and
2. A City Family of Modern Africa (color filmstrip with cassettes or records. 1. is 62 frames, 10 minutes; 2. is 50 frames, 7 minutes. $11 each)
Society for Visual Education, Inc., 1345 Diversey Parkway, Chicago, Illinois 60614.

These are "a day in the life of.."-type filmstrips focusing on children and their daily activities. Viewers see the youngsters with their families, doing chores, visiting, playing games. The narrative is, at places, somewhat paternal towards Africans. You might point this out to your students and discuss questions of ethnocentricity, only in simpler language.

An African City: Contrasting Cultures. (11 min. color. 16 mm. film $145 sale, $8 rent.)
BFA Educational Media, 2211 Michigan Avenue, Santa Monica, California 90404.

The different commercial and residential districts of Abidjan are explored in this film. Has very contemporary and catchy soundtrack music too, which students are likely to enjoy.

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"ESSENTIAL AFRICA" FOR THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

SELECTED AFRICAN MATERIALS

I. Written Materials

A. Social Studies

African Studies Handbook for Elementary and Secondary School Teachers. University of Massachusetts, Worcester Teacher Corp., 1971. $3.75. Available from: Center for International Education; School of Education; University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Mass. 02100. Rationale, suggested activities, and lesson plans on various topics including African dress, games, food, literature. These excellent materials are set out in such a manner that the whole or individual lessons can be used.

Aiyetoro: A Yoruba Village in Western Nigeria. Newton Public Schools, Division of Programs, 88 Chestnut Street, West Newton, Mass. 02165., 1967. $9.00. Grade 5 resource unit with lesson plans and pupil text focusing on the changing life in a village. If you are studying an American community you could use this to show how an African community is like or unlike it.

Black Studies Grade K-2. Publications Sales Office, New York City Board of Education, 110 Livingston Street, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201. $5.00. Syllabus which details both ideas and materials for a lively unit on Africa. Here, Africa is studied as it relates to Afro-American heritage.

Fishing and Farming in Africa. United States Committee for UNICEF. 1971. $1.00. A teaching unit which describes life on the coast and up-country in Dahomey. Since most of the other materials mentioned here deal with agricultural communities, this unit with a "fishing" component can be used to add another dimension.

B. English and Reading

Janet and Alex D'Amato. African Animals Through African Eyes. New York:Julian Messner, 1971. Most of our youngsters associate game animals with Africa. What better way to learn concretely about them than through the stories, art and religious beliefs of Africans themselves? The book also includes a bibliography of African folk tales. About $5.

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B. English and Reading (continued)

Godfrey Brown. Ee Ar Ee Ar Ee Ar. Lagos, Nigeria: The African Universities Press. All Africa Readers Series, 1970. The title comes from the noise one of the main characters makes when he is asleep! An amusing story of two men on an overnight trip in Sierra Leone. The booklet includes pictures, reading comprehension questions and activities. About 50¢.

Ronald Mackin and Miles Lee. The Four Friends. London: Oxford University Press, 1962. Three animal plays ("Ox and Lamb Go to Live in the Town"; "The Quarrel"; "The Wheelbarrow") which children can enact in the classroom, put on with shadow puppets, or otherwise dramatize. All have an African setting, though the props are ordinary items (and few!) that can be found in any school. About 50¢.

Efua Sutherland. Vulture! Vulture! Accra: Ghana Publishing House, 1968. Two plays with songs. The first "Vulture! Vulture!" tells of a bird who keeps annoying some children while they are trying to play; the second is about a boy's adventure when he goes fishing. Both are in a traditional Ghanaian form; that is, complete with choral responses, clapping and singing. About 50¢.

C. Science and Art

African Primary Science Program. Education Development Center. Newton, Mass. 02165, 1969. Series of eight booklets with an introduction designed for use in African elementary schools. "Cooking", "Plants", "Water", "Arts & Crafts", "Dry Sand", "Wet Sand", "Construction", "Woodwork", are the titles. Each sets out details of simple experiments, materials needed, questions to be asked. Could be used in science classes here to give children an idea of what African youngsters do in school. About $5.

Janet and Alex D'Amato. African Crafts For You to Make. New York: Julian Messner, 1969. Detailed directions, patterns, suggestions for materials for making a "count 'n capture" game, African masks, baskets, clothing, combs, musical instruments and model villages! Items from both the Ivory Coast and Kenya plus other countries are included so that this book could be used to extend the case studies too. About $5.

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C. Science and Art (continued)

Jean Carey Bond. A is for Africa. New York: Franklin Watts, 1969. Why not use this alphabet book for teaching letters and for inspiring children to make their own alphabet cards or posters for classroom decorations? About $5.

II. Audio-Visuals

Children of Africa: A Coloring Book. Washington, D.C.: Drum and Spear Press, 1970. Delightful pictures with captions that explain the history of the world's Black population. A different and fun way for children to learn history. $1.50.

Africa Map Puzzle. General Learning Corporation. Morristown, N.J. 07960. $7.95. A political map with wooden pieces representing the various national divisions. Children who enjoy puzzles might find this a fun way to learn geography.

African Recipes. New York: School Services, African-American Institute, 1973, free. Foods from all over the continent for you to cook right in your classroom in an electric frying pan. Children will likely enjoy tasting "peanut soup" or one of the other common dishes Africans eat.

1974 African Art Calendar. Field Museum of Natural History; Roosevelt Road at Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, Illinois 60605. $1.00. (In Volume 44, No. 11, December 1973 Bulletin). This appointment calendar is decorated with pictures of African art, both traditional and contemporary. Why not simply hang it in your classroom.

Anansi The Spider. film. 16 mm. color. 10 min. $15.00 rent. Texture Films, Inc., 1600 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10019. Animated folktale narrated by an African explaining how Anansi's sons saved his life and why the moon is in the sky. Since Anansi is obviously the "ancestor" of a main character in West Indian and Black American popular children's stories, this lovely film has a place in both African and Afro-American courses.

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Village on Stilts. film. 16 mm. color. 15 min. free. Available from U.S. Committee for UNICEF, 331 East 38 Street, New York, N.Y. 10016. Film shows how people live in a lagoon in Dahomey. Transportation, meals, classrooms, children's games are all detailed. If your students study either Amsterdam or Venice this would be excellent for comparisons!

III. Resources for the Teacher

Barry K Beyer. Africa: South of the Sahara: A Resource and Curriculum Guide. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, Inc., 1969. Though almost five years old this is still the only fairly comprehensive listing of available materials. The guide is not critical but descriptive; it identifies items that you can at least preview and indicates who are the major producers of African materials. About $5.

E. Jefferson Murphy and Harry Stein. Teaching Africa Today. New York: Citation Press, 1973. Outlines major themes by discipline that should be included in a study of Africa; also suggests materials and other resources for use in a classroom. With Beyer's guide a teacher has a pretty comprehensive survey of both what should be taught and what items there are available to teach it with. About $4.

A.F. Press Clips. Public Affairs Department, Bureau of African Affairs, 3509 State Department, Washington, D.C. 20520. Weekly round-up of current events in Africa as reported in U.S. and foreign newspapers. These are excellent up-to-date sources of what's going on for a teacher. But .... the audience for the press clips is supposed to be U.S.-Africa-related agencies of the government and they are not generally available to the American public. Recently, however, the Deputy Director of the Division, James Pope, agreed that teachers or other interested people could get on the mailing list for a limited period of time, i.e., for a month while teaching about the continent in school. Also, he is willing to provide back issues when they are available to those who write to him.

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